

589 dition that she does not remarry; the idea being that as long as
 765 the bones remain in the widow's keeping, the spirit of her
 husband is still with her. On this account many wives who
 revere their husband's memories, and who do not contemplate
 587 remarriage, purposely keep the bones for a long time. If a
 765 widow marries, even after the customary taboo period of one
 year, whilst her deceased husband's bones are still in her keeping,
 [346] she is generally looked down upon. Her children in such a
 case perform the ceremony of handing over the bones of their
 father to his clan in a building specially erected for the purpose.
 The widow cannot enter therein, or even go near it, whilst the
 ceremony is proceeding, no matter whether the *jing sang*, or the
 price for removing the taboo after a husband's death, has been
 595 paid to the husband's clan or not. There is no evidence to show
 that polyandry ever existed amongst the Khasis. Unlike the
 Thibetans, the Khasi women seem to have contented themselves
 always with one husband, at any rate with one at a time.
 Certainly at the present day they are monandrist. Polygamy
 does not exist amongst the Khasis; such a practice would
 naturally not be in vogue amongst a people who observe the
 matriarchate. There are instances, however, of men having wives
 other than those they have regularly married, and in the Wār
 country children by such wives enjoy rights to their father's
 acquired property equally with the children by the legally
 582 married wife. As the clans are strictly exogamous, a Khasi
 688 cannot take a wife from his own clan; to do this would entail
 764 the most disastrous religious, as well as social consequences.
 For to marry within the clan is the greatest sin a Khasi can
 commit, and would cause excommunication by his kinsfolk and
 the refusal of funeral ceremonies at death, and his bones would
 • [115] not be allowed a resting-place in the sepulchre of the clan. To
 614 give a list of all the Khasi exogamous clans would perhaps serve
 582 no useful purpose, but I have prepared from information, kindly
 furnished me by the Siems of Khyrim and Cherrapunji, a list of
 the clans in those States which will be found in Appendices A
 and B. These will suffice as examples. It will be seen from
 the Cherra list that the different divisions of the Diengdoh clan,
 viz. Lalu, Diengdoh-bah, Diengdoh-kylla, are prohibited from
 intermarriage; this is due to those branches of the clan being

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even if *i* lies with its outside downwards. If, however, *j* lies with its outside downwards, this is not a good sign.

3. If there are a number of pieces of egg-shell lying in a line, as at *k*, this is an evil prognostic, the line of shell fragments indicating the road to the funeral pyre. Such a line of shell fragments is called *ki'leng rah thang*. This sign is a harbinger of death.

4. If all the fragments of shell on both sides of the board, excepting the boat, lie with their insides downwards, the question asked by the egg-breaker is not answered. If *a* or *l* fall with their outsides downwards, this is a bad sign.

5. If the portion of a shell at *f* falls with the outside downwards, this indicates that some god needs appeasing by sacrifice.

6. If there are a number of small fragments lying around the boat, as in the diagram, these mean that there are many reasons for the illness, which cannot be ascertained.

7. If the portion of shell marked *s* is detached from the boat, this indicates that the goddess is very angry.

8. If four fragments lie around the boat so as to form a square, as *c, e, h, j*, these mean that the patient is at the point of death. These are called *ki leng sher thang*.

8. If there are no fragments, as at *d, e, f, g, h, i*, it is a puzzle. *ka leng kyntip*.

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Note.—The above information was obtained from U Sarup Singh, of Mairong; U Thuin, of Laitlyngkot, and U Bud, of Jowai. Different egg-breakers have somewhat different methods of reading the signs, but the main points are usually the same.

Monuments of the Khāsi Hill Tribes.

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nounce the hard G; and in all words of Hindustani origin this letter has the sound of K. 101 [197]

They are called by the tribes of Kúkis and Nágas on the west "Káro", the name they themselves have for the whole mass of hill people on their western side, the Gāros, though as we pass towards their confines, we find the names of local clans giving way to this general term which was not known to some of the villagers of West Nongstoin, who call the Gāros "Dékor."

The Gāro appellation for the Khāsis is "Dikkil" or "Digil"; and it was very interesting to find, after visiting the villages of both, that they mutually fear each other, and consequently border raids never occur. The Gāros owned that they feared the bow and arrow of their neighbour, a weapon they themselves are unacquainted with the use of.

The Khāsis always point to the east as the quarter from which they emigrated, but there is very little, if any, similarity with the languages of the people now occupying the hills on that side. [173] [197]

Before entering further on the subject matter of this paper, I must request my hearers or readers to remember that having no knowledge colloquially of the Khasi language, the information I give was obtained from natives who understood either English or Hindustani well. The greater part of the information was given me by a very intelligent man, a native inspector of schools in the district; thus I hope that all errors that exist may be hereafter corrected by others who have been able to elucidate with greater exactness the meaning of their many different rites and superstitions. 115 •

Certainly the most striking objects of interest in the Khāsi Hills are the upright stone monuments that are to be seen all over the country; these, set up by the wayside, or in the villages, more frequently cutting the sky on prominent hills, with the large slabs horizontally set before them, at once recall the Druidical remains of our own island, northern France, etc., and lead one to marvel at the similarity of the custom, and to inquire its origin and design. Many who visit those hills take it at once for granted that they are the graves of illustrious men, or, after a vain endeavour to get some information from the coolies about them, let the matter rest, or finally believe that the ashes of the dead, to whose memory the monoliths are erected, are buried under the flat kind of altar or dolmen seen in front. 764 211

It is always a very difficult matter to obtain information from semi-civilised people on such a subject as their religious rites, especially if the inquirer is ignorant of their language. A slight knowledge of Hindustani on the part of the Khāsia villager, renders the attempt still more hopeless, and the information given quite erroneous.

on a historical past, different from that of the Khasi proper, the former having been ruled by the powerful, but somewhat Hinduised dynasty of the Jaintia Rajas until the Jaintia Wars of the British; the latter by small independent chiefs. Yet Jaintia social organization appears on the whole to preserve the matrilineal social structure clearer and to be less influenced by plains-acculturation, than that of the Khasi, though a few features of Brahmanical religious observances and also some traces of racial admixture are found in the immediate vicinity of Jowai, the former summer residence of the Jaintia Rajas. Stronger no doubt, than this influence, was that exercised by the British and non-Assamese-Indians in the provincial capital Shillong since 1866. Methods of agriculture and other aspects of material civilization differ but little in the Jaintia- and Khasi plateau-areas.

The same cannot be said of both: the Wār-Khasi and Wār-Jaintias. Linguistically their affiliations are with the Khasi or Jaintias respectively, in the plateau-areas. Economically, however, both Wār-groups form a separate pan-leaf cultivating unit in the little accessible steep southern slopes of the Khasi- and Jaintia Hill massif. Both Wār-groups live in the environment of luscious tropical flora and fauna, sharply differentiated from the cool, barren plateau with its perennial winds and the heroic, if solitary beauty of its highland heaths, which forms the background of both the Khasi- and Jaintia plateau-groups.

The age of the Wār-Khasi and -Jaintias, as one independent economic, — and two half-independent dialectical linguistic entities, is an intricate problem. The two Wār-groups subsist on pan-leaf cultivation as a money crop, grown in the thick tree-gardens as creepers; not on food-cultivation, as do the plateau-groups, because there is insufficient space on the steep slopes, for vegetable gardens or -fields. The pan-leaf cultivators therefore depend on food, purchased from outside. The slopes seem to have been uninhabited until not long ago. Yet pan-leaf chewing is such an integral part of Khasi life, that until quite recently, and occasionally even now, a distance between two places is not measured by the number of hours used for walking, but by the number of betelnut- and pan-leaf packages, consumed on the way. Also the common benediction among Khasi expresses the wish that so and so may eat pan in the Garden of God. Yet pan-cultivation and the settlements of the Wār-people as pan-leaf cultivators in the southern slopes seem comparatively young. Pan-cultivation on the plateau is impracticable. It is therefore possible that pan was for a long time only a much valued import article from the plains, bartered against Khasi ore and iron tools, though it is now an export article from the Wār-country, brought to the markets of the plains, by both Wār-Khasi and Wār-Jaintia women and men.

According to a tradition, across which I came among the Nonglamín clan of the Nongmuker village, the ancestors of the present Wār people were on the plateau at a time when no pan-cultivation was going on in the slopes and none of the present big estates of pan-tree gardens was yet held by their present (Wār-) owners. A not distant ancestor of a Nonglamín clan-member who about two or three generations ago told the story to U Siang (one of

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[15] my informants at Padu), in the year 1933, is said to have begun the cultivation of yam (*shniic*) and millets (*knei*) in the then uncultivated slopes. He and his people used to be, on this account, ridiculed as monkeys (*shrieh*). The Nonglamin clan took later to pan-leaf-, and arecanut-cultivation and became one of the richest landowners of the Wár-country. Others followed and imitated them. This clan (*kur*) is now residing at Nongtalang, about ten miles east of Padu in the Wár-Jaintia slopes.

174 This possibility of a comparatively recent origin of the now economically
184 independent Wár-groups among the Khasi speaking peoples is of importance
601 to the question of some different terms in kinship terminology which the following lists will show.

184 Comments on other features in the relationship terminology, bearing
601 on sociological or historical problems of either among the four Khasi speaking groups under discussion, are being hinted at in the text of the lists itself and further discussed in Part Three of the present paper, following the lists of kinship terms.